CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method for representing files stored in stacks, the method comprising:

providing a set of stack icons, each icon in the set having a stack height representing a range of stack sizes;

determining a stack size for a selected stack; and

selecting and displaying an appropriate stack icon from the set of stack icons based on the determined stack size.

2.   The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a set of five stack icons, the set of five stack icons including a large stack icon, a medium stack icon, a small stack icon, a two item stack icon, and an empty stack icon.

3.   The method of claim 2, further comprising providing a unique empty stack icon that displays an image distinct from other icons in the set.

4.   The method of claim 2, further comprising selecting the large stack icon if the stack includes more files than the large stack icon displays.

5.   The method of claim 4, further comprising selecting the medium stack icon if the stack includes a larger number of items than the medium stack icon displays, but a smaller number than the large stack icon displays and selecting the small stack icon if the stack includes more files than the small stack icon displays but fewer than the medium stack icon displays.

6.   The method of claim 5, further comprising selecting the two item stack icon if the stack has at least one item and has fewer items than the small stack icon displays.

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7.   The method of claim 6, further comprising selecting the empty stack icon if the stack is empty.

8.   The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a distinct set of stack icons for each of multiple distinct libraries, wherein each distinct set of stack icons portrays information relevant to a corresponding distinct library.

9.   The method of claim 8, further comprising selecting a stack icon based on both stack height and an appropriate library.

10.   The method of claim 8, further comprising storing a set of property based icons for at least one of the multiple distinct libraries, wherein the property based icons include an overlay indicating a file type.

11.   The method of claim 8, further comprising storing a set of custom thumbnail icons for at least one selected library, wherein the custom thumbnail icons include at least one image from a stack within the at least one selected library.

12.   A computer readable medium storing the computer executable instructions for performing the method of claim 1.

13.   A method for representing a selected stack of files, wherein the selected stack is stored within one of multiple libraries, the method comprising:

providing an icon for each library, each icon for each library portraying information relevant to the library;

storing multiple icons portraying the relevant information for each library, wherein each of the multiple icons in each library represents a range of stack heights; and

representing a selected stack by determining an appropriate library and an appropriate stack height and displaying a corresponding icon.

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14.   The method of claim 13, further comprising providing a set of five stack icons for each library, the set of five stack icons including a large stack icon, a medium stack icon, a small stack icon, a two item stack icon, and an empty stack icon.

15.   The method of claim 14, further comprising providing a unique empty stack icon that displays an image distinct from other icons in the set.

16.   The method of claim 14, further comprising selecting the large stack icon if the stack includes more files than the large stack icon displays.

17.   The method of claim 14, further comprising selecting the medium stack icon if the stack includes a larger number of items than the medium stack icon displays, but a smaller number than the large stack icon displays and selecting the small stack icon if the stack includes more files than the small stack icon displays but fewer than the medium stack icon displays.

18.   The method of claim 14, further comprising selecting the two item stack icon if the stack has at least one item and has fewer items than the small stack icon.

19.   The method of claim 14, further comprising selecting the empty stack icon if the stack is empty.

20.   The method of claim 13, further comprising storing a set of property based icons for at least one of the multiple libraries, wherein the property based icons include an overlay indicating a file type.

21.   The method of claim 13, further comprising storing a set of custom thumbnail icons for at least one selected library, wherein the custom thumbnail icons include at least one image from a stack within the at least one selected library.

22.   A computer readable medium storing the computer executable instructions for performing the method of claim 13.

23.   A system for representing a selected stack of files, the system comprising:

stored sets of default stack icons, each stored set of default stack icons representing and portraying information relevant to a corresponding library, wherein each stored set of default stack icons includes multiple icons, each included icon representing a range of stack heights;

icon selection tools for determining if the selected stack of files belongs to a library having a corresponding stored set of default icons and for determining an appropriate stack height, wherein upon locating an appropriate library and stack height, the icon selection tools select and display an appropriate icon from an appropriate set of default icons.

24.   The system of claim 23, wherein each stored set of default icons comprises a set of five stack icons, the set of five stack icons including a large stack icon, a medium stack icon, a small stack icon, a two item stack icon, and an empty stack icon.

25.   The system of claim 24, further comprising a unique empty stack icon that displays an image distinct from other icons in the set.

26.   The system of claim 23, further comprising a set of property based icons for at least one library, wherein the property based icons include an overlay indicating a file type.

27.   The system of claim 23, further comprising a set of custom thumbnail icons for at least one selected library, wherein the custom thumbnail icons include at least one image from a stack within the at least one selected library.

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28.   The system of claim 23, further comprising counting tools for counting the number of files in a selected stack and displaying the number of items adjacent the appropriate icon.